



Meditations

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Part 1

In the space which thought creates around itself there is no love. This space divides man from man, and in it is all the becoming, the battle of life, the agony and fear. Meditation is the ending of this space, the ending of the me. Then relationship has quite a different meaning, for in that space which is not made by thought, the other does not exist, for you do not exist. Meditation then is not the pursuit of some vision, however sanctified by tradition. Rather it is the endless space where thought cannot enter. To us, the little space made by thought around itself, which is the me, is extremely important, for this is all the mind knows, identifying itself with everything that is in that space. And the fear of not being is born in that space. But in meditation, when this is understood, the mind can enter into a dimension of space where action is inaction. We do not know what love is, for in the space made by thought around itself as the me, love is the conflict of the me and the not-me. This conflict, this torture, is not love. Thought is the very denial of love, and it cannot enter into that space where the me is not. In that space is the benediction which man seeks and cannot find. He seeks it within the frontiers of thought, and thought destroys the ecstasy of this benediction.

Part 2

Perception without the word, which is without thought, is one of the strangest phenomena. Then the perception is much more acute, not only with the brain, but also with all the senses. Such perception is not the fragmentary perception of the intellect nor the affair of the emotions. It can be called a total perception, and it is part of meditation. Perception without the perceiver in meditation is to commune with the height and depth of the immense. This perception is entirely different from seeing an object without an observer, because in the perception of meditation there is no object and therefore no experience. Meditation can, however, take place when the eyes are open and one is surrounded by objects of every kind. But then these objects have no importance at all. One sees them but there is no process of recognition, which means there is no experiencing.

What meaning has such meditation? There is no meaning; there is no utility. But in that meditation there is a movement of great ecstasy which is not to be confounded with pleasure. It is this ecstasy which gives to the eye, to the brain and to the heart, the quality of innocence. Without seeing life as something totally new, it is a routine, a boredom, a meaningless affair. So meditation is of the greatest importance. It opens the door to the incalculable, to the measureless.

Part 3

When you turn your head from horizon to horizon your eyes see a vast space in which all the things of the earth and of the sky appear. But this space is always limited where the earth meets the sky. The space in the mind is so small. In this little space all our activities seem to take place: the daily living and the hidden struggles with contradictory desires and motives. In this little space the mind seeks freedom, and so it is always a prisoner of itself. Meditation is the ending of this little space. To us, action is bringing about order in this little space of the mind. But there is another action which is not putting order in this little space. Meditation is action which comes when the mind has lost its little space. This vast space which the mind, the I, cannot reach, is silence. The mind can never be silent within itself; it is silent only within the vast space which thought cannot touch. Out of this silence there is action which is not of thought. Meditation is this silence.

Part 4

Meditation is one of the most extraordinary things, and if you do not know what it is you are like the blind man in a world of bright colour, shadows and moving light. It is not an intellectual affair, but when the heart enters into the mind, the mind has quite a different quality: it is really, then, limitless, not only in its capacity to think, to act efficiently, but also in its sense of living in a vast space where you are part of everything. Meditation is the movement of love. It isn't the love of the one or of the many. It is like water that anyone can drink out of any jar, whether golden or earthenware: it is inexhaustible. And a peculiar thing takes place which no drug or self-hypnosis can bring about: it is as though the mind enters into itself, beginning at the surface and penetrating ever more deeply, until depth and height have lost their meaning and every form of measurement ceases. In this state there is complete peace not contentment which has come about through gratification but a peace that has order, beauty and intensity. It can all be destroyed, as you can destroy a flower, and yet because of its very vulnerability it is indestructible. This meditation cannot be learned from another. You must begin without knowing anything about it, and move from innocence to innocence.

The soil in which the meditative mind can begin is the soil of everyday life, the strife, the pain, and the fleeting joy. It must begin there, and bring order, and from there move endlessly. But if you are concerned only with making order, then that very order will bring about its own limitation, and the mind will be its prisoner. In all this movement you must somehow begin from the other end, from the other shore, and not always be concerned with this shore or how to cross the river. You must take a plunge into the water, not knowing how to swim. And the beauty of meditation is that you never know where you are, where you are going, what the end is.

Part 5

Is there a new experience in meditation? The desire for experience, the higher experience which is beyond and above the daily or the commonplace, is what keeps the well-spring empty. The craving for more experience, for visions, for higher perception, for some realization or other, makes the mind look outward, which is no different from its dependence on environment and people. The curious part of meditation is that an event is not made into an experience. It is there, like a new star in the heavens, without memory taking it over and holding it, without the habitual process of recognition and response in terms of like and dislike. Our search is always outgoing; the mind seeking any experience is outgoing. Inward-going is not a search at all; it is perceiving. Response is always repetitive, for it comes always from the same bank of memory.

Part 6

After the rains the hills were splendid. They were still brown from the summer sun, and now all the green things would come out. It had rained quite heavily, and the beauty of those hills was indescribable. The sky was still clouded and in the air there was the smell of sumac, sage and eucalyptus. It was splendid to be among them, and a strange stillness possessed you. Unlike the sea which lay far down below you, those hills were completely still. As you watched and looked about you, you had left everything down below in that little house your clothes, your thoughts and the odd ways of life. Here you were travelling very lightly, without any thoughts, without any burden, and with a feeling of complete emptiness and beauty. The little green bushes would soon be still greener, and in a few weeks' time they would have a stronger smell. The quails were calling and a few of them flew over. Without knowing it, the mind was in a state of meditation in which love was flowering. After all,

only in the soil of meditation can this flower bloom. It was really quite marvellous, and strangely, all through the night it pursued you, and when you woke, long before the sun was up, it was still there in your heart with its incredible joy, for no reason whatsoever. It was there, causeless, and was quite intoxicating. It would be there all through the day without your ever asking or inviting it to stay with you.

Part 7

It had rained heavily during the night and the day, and down the gullies the muddy stream poured into the sea, making it chocolate-brown. As you walked on the beach the waves were enormous and they were breaking with magnificent curve and force. You walked against the wind, and suddenly you felt there was nothing between you and the sky, and this openness was heaven. To be so completely open, vulnerable to the hills, to the sea and to man is the very essence of meditation. To have no resistance, to have no barriers inwardly towards anything, to be really free, completely, from all the minor urges, compulsions and demands, with all their little conflicts and hypocrisies, is to walk in life with open arms. And that evening, walking there on that wet sand, with the seagulls around you, you felt the extraordinary sense of open freedom and the great beauty of love which was not in you or outside you but everywhere. We don't realize how important it is to be free of the nagging pleasures and their pains, so that the mind remains alone. It is only the mind that is wholly alone that is open. You felt all this suddenly, like a great wind that swept over the land and through you. There you were denuded of everything, empty and therefore utterly open. The beauty of it was not in the word or in the feeling, but seemed to be everywhere about you, inside you, over the waters and in the hills. Meditation is this.

Part 8

It was one of those lovely mornings that have never been before. The sun was just coming up and you saw it between the eucalyptus and the pine. It was over the waters, golden, burnished such light that exists only between the mountains and the sea. It was such a clear morning, breathless, full of that strange light that one sees not only with one's eyes but with one's heart. And when you see it the heavens are very close to earth, and you are lost in the beauty. You know, you should never meditate in public, or with another, or in a group: you should meditate only in solitude, in the quiet of the night or in the still, early morning. When you meditate in solitude, it must be solitude. You must be completely alone, not following a system, a method, repeating words, or pursuing a thought, or shaping a thought according to your desire. This solitude comes when the mind is freed from thought. When there are influences of desire or of the things that the mind is pursuing, either in the future or in the past, there is no solitude. Only in the immensity of the present this aloneness comes. And then, in quiet secrecy in which all communication has come to an end, in which there is no observer with his anxieties, with his stupid appetites and problems only then, in that quiet aloneness, meditation becomes something that cannot be put into words. Then meditation is an eternal movement. I don't know if you have ever meditated, if you have ever been alone, by yourself, far away from everything, from every person, from every thought and pursuit, if you have ever been completely alone, not isolated, not withdrawn into some fanciful dream or vision, but far away, so that in yourself there is nothing recognizable, nothing that you touch by thought or feeling, so far away that in this full solitude the very silence becomes the only flower, the only light, and the timeless quality that is not measurable by thought. Only in such meditation love has its being. Don't bother to express it: it will express itself. Don't use it. Don't try to put it into action: it will act, and when it acts, in that action there is no regret, no contradiction, none of the misery and travail of man.

So meditate alone. Get lost. And don't try to remember where you have been. If you try to remember it then it will be something that is dead. And if you hold on to the memory of it then you will never be alone again. So meditate in that endless solitude, in the beauty of that love, in that innocence, in the new then there is the bliss that is imperishable.

The sky is very blue, the blue that comes after the rain, and these rains have come after many months of drought. After the rain the skies are washed clean and the hills are rejoicing, and the earth is still. And every leaf has the light of the sun on it, and the feeling of the earth is very close to you. So meditate in the very secret recesses of your heart and mind, where you have never been before.

Part 9

That morning the sea was like a lake or an enormous river without a ripple, and so calm that you could see the reflections of the stars so early in the morning. The dawn had not yet come, and so the stars, and the reflection of the cliff, and the distant lights of the town, were there on the water. And as the sun came up over the horizon in a cloudless sky it made a golden path, and it was extraordinary to see that light of California filling the earth and every leaf and blade of grass. As you watched, a great stillness came into you. The brain itself became very quiet, without any reaction, without a movement, and it was strange to feel this immense stillness. "Feel" isn't the word. The quality of that silence, that stillness, is not felt by the brain; it is beyond the brain. The brain can conceive, formulate or make a design for the future, but this stillness is beyond its range, beyond all imagination, beyond all desire. You are so still that your body becomes completely part of the earth, part of everything that is still.

And as the slight breeze came from the hills, stirring the leaves, this stillness, this extraordinary quality of silence, was not disturbed. The house was between the hills and the sea, over- looking the sea. And as you watched the sea, so very still you really became part of everything. You were everything. You were the light, and the beauty of love. Again, to say "you were a part of everything" is also wrong: the word "you" is not adequate because you really weren't there. You didn't exist. There was only that stillness, the beauty, the extraordinary sense of love. The words you and I separate things. This division in this strange silence and stillness doesn't exist. And as you watched out of the window, space and time seemed to have come to an end, and the space that divides had no reality. That leaf and that eucalyptus and the blue shining water were not different from you.

Meditation is really very simple. We complicate it. We weave a web of ideas round it what it is and what it is not. But it is none of these things. Because it is so very simple it escapes us, because our minds are so complicated, so time-worn and time-based. And this mind dictates the activity of the heart, and then the trouble begins. But meditation comes naturally, with extraordinary ease, when you walk on the sand or look out of your window or see those marvellous hills burnt by last summer's sun. Why are we such tortured human beings, with tears in our eyes and false laughter on our lips? If you could walk alone among those hills or in the woods or along the long, white, bleached sands, in that solitude you would know what meditation is. The ecstasy of solitude comes when you are not frightened to be alone no longer belonging to the world or attached to anything. Then, like that dawn that came up this morning, it comes silently, and makes a golden path in the very stillness, which was at the beginning, which is now, and which will be always there.

Part 10

Happiness and pleasure you can buy in any market at a price. But bliss you cannot buy for yourself or for another. Happiness and pleasure are time-binding. Only in total freedom does bliss exist. Pleasure, like happiness, you can seek, and find, in many ways. But they come, and go. Bliss that strange sense of joy has no motive. You cannot possibly seek it. Once it is there, depending on the quality of your mind, it remains timeless, causeless, and a thing that is not measurable by time. Meditation is not the pursuit of pleasure and the search for happiness. Meditation, on the contrary, is a state of mind in which there is no concept or formula and therefore total freedom. It is only to such a mind that this bliss comes unsought and uninvited. Once it is there, though you may live in the world with all its noise, pleasure and brutality, they will not touch that mind. Once it is there, conflict has ceased. But the ending of conflict is not necessarily the total freedom. Meditation is a movement of the mind in this freedom. In this explosion of bliss the eyes are made innocent, and love is then benediction.

Part 11

Meditation is not the mere control of body and thought, nor is it a system of breathing-in and breathing-out. The body must be still, healthy and without strain; sensitivity of feeling must be sharpened and sustained; and the mind with all its chattering, disturbances and gropings must come to an end. It is not the organism that one must begin with, but rather it is the mind with its opinions, prejudices and self-interest that must be seen to. When the mind is healthy, vital and vigorous, then feeling will be heightened and will be extremely sensitive. Then the body, with its own natural intelligence which hasn't been spoiled by habit and taste, will function as it should.

So one must begin with the mind and not with the body, the mind being thought and the varieties of expressions of thought. Mere concentration makes thought narrow, limited and brittle, but concentration comes as a natural thing when there is an awareness of the ways of thought. This awareness does not come from the thinker who chooses and discards, who holds on to and rejects. This awareness is without choice and is both the outer and the inner; it is an interflow between the two, so the division between the outer and the inner comes to an end. Thought destroys feeling, feeling being love. Thought can offer only pleasure, and in the pursuit of pleasure love is pushed aside. The pleasure of eating, of drinking, has its continuity in thought, and merely to control or suppress this pleasure which thought has brought about has no meaning; it creates only various forms of conflict and compulsion.

Thought, which is matter, cannot seek that which is beyond time, for thought is memory, and the experience in that memory is as dead as the leaf of last autumn.

In awareness of all this comes attention, which is not the product of inattention. It is inattention which has dictated the pleasureable habits of the body and diluted the intensity of feeling. Inattention cannot be made into attention. The awareness of inattention is attention.

The seeing of this whole complex process is meditation from which alone comes order in this confusion. This order is as absolute as is the order in mathematics, and from this there is action the immediate doing. Order is not arrangement, design and proportion; these come much later. Order comes out of a mind that is not cluttered up by the things of thought. When thought is silent there is emptiness, which is order.